

Wha - Happenin' Quarterly Newsletter



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Events – TBA

Steelband – Kester Thomas

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For things Caribbean

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Dear Members

Winter Edition June 2014

As we approach the coldest part of the year, things at CARIBVIC are getting warmer with a number of important events taking place within the next three months.

The most important one is the Annual General Meeting scheduled to take place on Sunday 17th August. Once again there will be vacancies to be filled on the Committee and we are appealing to Members to volunteer their time to assist with the forward momentum of CARIBVIC. The commitment in time extends to maybe 4-5 hours per month and of course we are seeking a genuine commitment to CARIBVIC in terms of time and effort.

At our AGM in 2013, a decision was taken to increase our annual membership fee. It was left to our Committee to finalise the quantum and it has now been decided that the annual fee will be increased from \$15 to \$25 effective 1 July, 2014. In spite of this relatively small increase, it is the initiative of the existing Committee to increase membership in the coming year. In this regard, we look forward to your continued support, both from present and past members alike.

Our Angostura/CARIBVIC Steelband continues to make progress, practising twice per week at our Jika Jika venue. Plans are afoot for the Band to make their first public appearance at our Cultural Day on Sunday 16th November.

As has been customary for the past two years, our Winter Warm-up Dinner Dance will take place on Saturday 2nd August at the Box Hill Community Arts Centre. Here again, we look forward to your support. There will be a reduced cost for Financial Members with the cost of tickets being \$15.00 for Members and \$25.00 for Non Members.

We are looking forward to catching up with you at our next event. Best wishes to all.

Roger Phillips

President

A TRIBUTE to *Maya Angelou*

We take time out to reflect on the life of Dr Maya Angelou and the legacy she has left us.
Rest In Peace Maya - May 2014

She made African-Americans honour their Africanness and she made America understand why these traditions were worth celebrating. For people of colour all over the world, she came like an answer to a prayer.

"West Indians and African-Americans are more alike than we are different.

Culturally, we also share the same experience; the way we use music, literature and lyrics; and that feeling for family is very tight in African-American and Caribbean communities. We both love telling these long tales with no documents to back them up," she laughs.

Her voice is also full of calypso. *"My mother's father jumped off a ship, in Florida, at the turn of the twentieth century," she says. "But then, he went back to Trinidad, got his father and then they both jumped ship in Tampa. I learned a lot about Trinidad's culture from my mom. The food and the recipes, I learned to cook the codfish, the ochroes, and the greens."*

May 26 marked the Republic of Guyana's 48th Anniversary of Independence – Congratulations!

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Book Report

After much discussion, thoughts of publishing our book ***Adding Pimento*** in China look a possibility.

Tom Seville has kindly offered his services at Breakdown Press to collate and layout a full size sample of the book after a recent meeting with him.

Quotes from the Chinese will be sought in the coming weeks. It will be considerably less than quoted in Victoria and therefore more achievable.

At this stage we estimate 100 Hard cover copies of our 180-page book (includes photos and documents) will be sufficient to have at the Launch and for sale at cost price, but afterwards at a cost to be determined. A copy of the book will be given to each of CaribVic, the Victoria University, the Melbourne Immigration Museum, the State Library of Victoria, and any of our Sponsors featured in our book. Surplus copies will be for sale at a recognised Book store e.g. Readings in Carlton. However, reprints can be ordered in quantities to be decided.

We are eternally grateful to Michael Smith and his team at APC Logistics Pty Ltd in Port Melbourne for their generous contribution to this publication.

We will know the outcome of our Grant application at the end of June after which we will fix the launch date.

In the meantime we still need to collect photos and memorabilia to support your story. If you have not yet submitted please call us at CaribVic on 0424 715 530 to make the necessary arrangements to collect same.

CaribVic Steelband



We have had two successful workshops with the renowned and highly regarded Pan Duo: Heather and Denis Gonzalez Founders of the NSW Schools Steelband Association..

A Tenor Club has been formed under the guidance of Denis Gonzalez. We are searching Victoria for any persons of interest with the hope that we will recruit at least 6 Tenors. Music from Denis will be emailed for the Tenors to practice at home and then attend a proposed monthly Jam Session will be established. While on holidays, we conducted a 3-hour working B at the Pan yard in Northcote to start the preparations for the re-spraying of the 23 steelpans in our Angostura colours as they have outfitted the Band with Hats, Sunglasses and Polo shirts. Black trousers would complete our Band uniform in readiness for our performance on Cultural Day. Still lots to do so if you can help us in any way please put your hand up.

Our Music Teacher and Arranger Sarah Barnett returns to Melbourne in June 2014

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UPCOMING EVENTS:-

SUNDAY 17 AUGUST 2014 – Annual General Meeting

At the new Library at the Dock 2:00pm – 4:00pm
Collins & Bourke Street intersection in Docklands down by the sea



SATURDAY August/September 2014 – Annual Dinner Dance 7:00pm – 11:00pm
Box Hill Community Arts Centre **BYO Drinks n Nibbles**
470 Station Street **Financial Members \$15.00**
Box Hill 3168 **Non-Members \$25.00**
Proudly supported by the Whitehorse City Council – [Watch this space!!](#)



SUNDAY 5 October 2014 – Dr Ralph Newmark – History of the Caribbean through MUSIC
Director Institute of Latin American Studies
Lecturer La Trobe University
Box Hill Community Arts Centre 1:00pm – 4:00pm
470 Station Street
Box Hill 3168



CARIBVIC
The Caribbean Association of Victoria

SUNDAY AGE - M. MAGAZINE
April 27, 2014

ARTS & CULTURE

A powerful picture of the dispossessed

Review by **THUY ON**

Anyone who has ever dismissed the short story as an inferior art form compared to its more showy, full-length, novelistic counterpart may have to reconsider after picking up Maxine Beneba Clarke's debut collection. *Foreign Soil* won the 2013 Victorian Premier's Literary Award for an unpublished manuscript and, on the strength of it, Clarke was granted a three-book deal. Although it will be followed by a novel and a memoir over the next few years, these 10 stories are a substantial body of work in their own right and offer an exciting precursor of Clarke's future writings.

Foreign Soil is populated by a rag-tag underclass, by non-white characters subsisting on a diet of porridge, potatoes and welfare cheques; who are overlooked, sidelined, bullied and denied. They are the dispossessed, the newly arrived, the refugee-seekers, the stary-eyed hopefuls.

Not since the release of Nam Le's *The Boat* has a book of short stories created such a frisson of interest. Like Le's collection, *Foreign Soil*'s expansive panorama is multicultural in scope. Clarke's stories also roam within and beyond Australian shores: from the grimy unloved backstreets of Footscray, to the Detention Centre in Villawood; from a lazy-paced Kingston, to overcharged London and an isolated Mississippi homestead. The anthology is bookended by stories set in Melbourne's inner-west, a not quite gentrifying postcode where the latest round of successful asylum seekers are making new lives for themselves and trying to negotiate the chasm between the old country and the new.

They are the lucky ones. In one of the longest stories, *The Still Fishermen of Kathaluwa*, a young man is locked inside the Sydney immigration detention centre, with no recourse for an appeal for refugee status. After making a perilous journey via boat, with death a constant companion, he's told that he will be sent back to Sri Lanka. The self-harm, sewn-lipped reaction to his pleas being blithely ignored to feeling that he has "no tongue" has a shocking poetic justice.

In fact, dialogue, broken and accented English and



Subverting clichés:
Maxine Beneba Clarke.
Photo: Nicholas Walton-Healey

vernacular feature strongly in the book. Clarke is also a spoken word performer with two poetry collections to her name as well as so it's not surprising that her prose has some of the clipped, rhythmic, sing-song quality of her poetry.

An Australian of Afro-Caribbean descent, Clarke's tales are often but not exclusively driven by the contentious issue of race. In *Harlem Jones*, the eponymous lead character meets up with a mate to attend a protest in London after a police shooting of a black man. In his hands is a Molotov cocktail.

Ava, the protagonist in *Shu Yi* "wanted less springy afro curl, eyes less the colour of wet potting mix. I craved skin a little milkier than the specific shade of strong-with-a-dash I was." With her family of five trying to assimilate into blond-brick, whitewashed suburbia, and herself a victim of racial taunts, Ava ends up turning against an innocent even further lower on the pecking order: a new Asian girl at school.

Yet, lest one thinks the book simply panders to the notion that being black means being oppressed, Clarke deftly subverts the stereotype. In the title story, which plaits together the fraying relationship between Ange, a white woman and Mukasa, an Ugandan man, it becomes scarily obvious that once they return to his home town, she is trapped in this landlocked country, "Sudan, Rwanda or Tanzania were the furthest she could run. Every escape would be foreign soil."



FOREIGN SOIL
Maxine Beneba Clarke
Hachette, \$24.99

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You're invited to make a difference for CaribVic.

Make a difference to your community by volunteering. Volunteers are the lifeblood of any community organisation. Without volunteer involvement at all levels in our community group, CaribVic would cease to exist.

There are so many ways that you can be involved in CaribVic through coaching, mentoring, discussing, administrating and more.

We need you to put up your hand to say that you would help CaribVic move forward.

So how do you get involved?

Contact us via email at info@caribvic.com or leave a message for Roger Phillips Phone: 0418 524 114

Our Annual General Meeting will be held on Sunday 17th August 2014 in Docklands. Please RSVP.

A Winter Recipe to warm the 'cockles' of your heart: Split Peas Soup with Dumplings



This is a take on a basic but extraordinary soup your West Indian mother/grandmother would make with simple ingredients like yellow split peas, herbs, ham hocks, bacon bones, oxtail or cow heel, salted cod instead of salted pig tail but tons of dumplings. For that Caribbean vibe in the pot in Melbourne we can find ham hocks, smoked bacon bones and at times oxtails for added flavour.

You'll Need...

- 2 cups yellow split peas
- 1kg. bacon bones or 1 x hock that will fit in your pot
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 hot (scotch bonnet) pepper optional
- 1 tablespoon veg oil
- 1 large onion
- 4 sprigs thyme
- 2 chives or spring onions
- 4 large potatoes or a mix of any other soup vegetables of your choice (yams/eddoes)
- 3-4 cups coconut milk optional
- 6-8 cups water
- 4 cloves garlic
- 1 cup flour + water for dumplings

Note: you can make this split peas soup fully vegetarian and leave out the meat. Just add about 2/3 teaspoon salt in cooking.

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Method:

As the vegetable oil heats on a medium flame in a deep soup pot, prep the ingredients. Dice the garlic, onion and scallions and peel and cut the vegetables into quarters.

The oil should be hot now, so toss in the garlic, onion, scallion and thyme and reduce the heat to low. After about 3-4 minutes, go in with the black pepper and then toss in the meat or bones. Raise the heat to medium and give it a good stir. Wash and drain the split peas (place in a strainer and run cool water while running your fingers through the grains), then add it to the pot

It's now time to add the water, coconut milk and vegetables (you can always add carrots, green bananas/plantain, sweet potatoes, and ground provisions to the pot if you desire. However our grandmother would always include yam if it was in season)

to the pot and bring to a boil. Then lower to a simmer and drop in the scotch bonnet pepper 'whole'! This will give us a ton of flavour but not the raw heat. Near the end you can remove the springs from the thyme as well as the whole scotch bonnet pepper. Or if you want that Caribbean sunshine, you can burst it for real fyah!

After about 50 minutes of simmering (remember to keep stirring) the pieces of meat should be tender and the split peas should start to dissolve; a sign that it's time to add the flour dumplings.

In a bowl place the flour and enough water to make a soft but firm dough (tip – add a pinch of sugar to the dough) , then work with a fork then go in with your hands to make the dough ball. Let it rest for about 5 minutes, then start pinching small pieces off and shape into a sort of cigarette shape (spinners). Add to the pot and cook for another 8 minutes.

Now taste for salt (adjust accordingly) remove the pepper if you so desire and don't forget to also get rid of the springs from the thyme.

IMPORTANT! This split peas soup will thicken drastically as it cools so be sure to add more water if needed.

Turn off the heat and serve HOT!

Also bear in mind that this is not like an English/Australian soup, but more like a thick stew and it will (no matter how hard you try) turn out to be a very large pot of soup.